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Memorial

of the

Rev. R. Walker

of Wymeswold.

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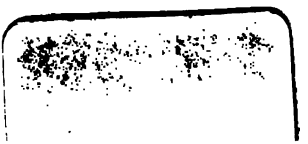

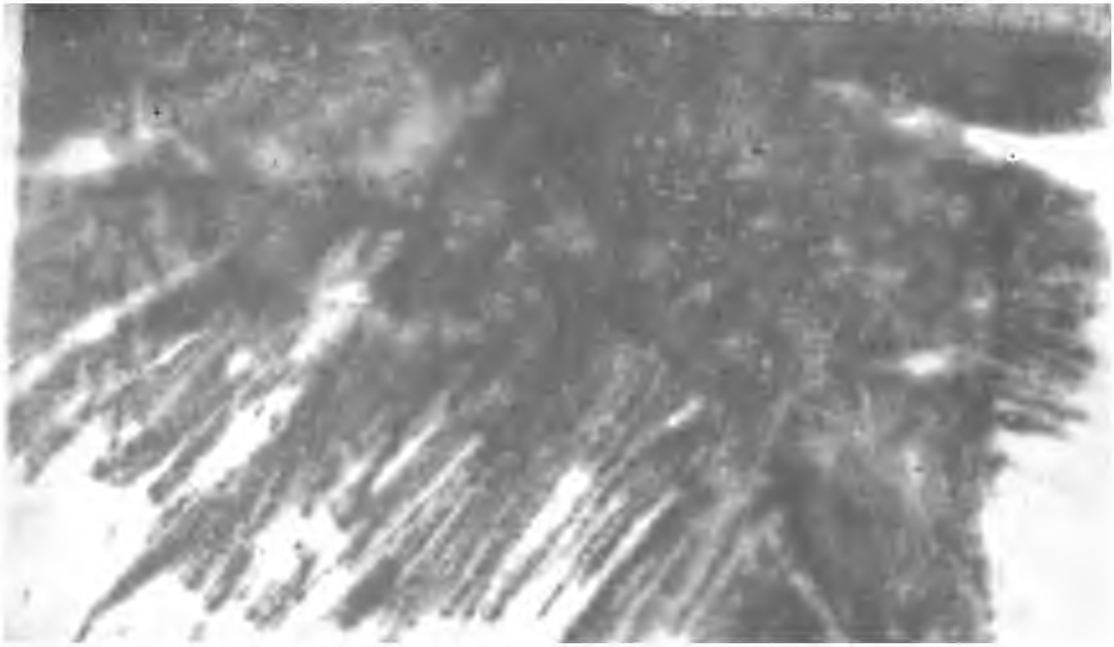

MEMORIAL

OF THE

SPIRITUAL LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE LATE

REV. ROBERT WALKER,

VICAR OF WYMESWOLD, LEICESTERSHIRE:
FORMERLY FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

The memory of the just is blessed.

LONDON:
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H. WILLS, MARKET PLACE.

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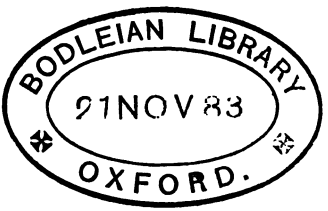

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STANDING as he did by the grace of God a witness to the power of living faith as wrought in the souls of those who are taught of God, the testimony of Mr. WALKER is highly to be esteemed. Very few writings, however, have been left by him from which to gather it up: nevertheless it shines in a blessed manner in the following pages, as a true testimony when given in simplicity always shines in the eyes of those who by the same grace are enabled to discern it. May the Lord of the harvest command His blessing upon it as 'seed sown,' or 'bread cast upon the waters,' that in this day of the pride of human reason it may go 'from faith to faith,' and that by it the faith of God's elect may be strengthened and increased.

MEMORIAL

OF THE LATE

REV. ROBERT WALKER.

In a brief memorial like the present of a departed saint, a loved and esteemed minister of Christ Jesus, as was the late Rev. Robert Walker, Vicar of Wymeswold in Leicestershire, there is no place for much that might be truly said of natural gifts and scientific attainments. These indeed he possessed, and in no ordinary degree, as his success at Cambridge proves (he was Second Wrangler and Second Smith's Prizeman, in the year 1847); but it was the sanctifying of these gifts by the grace of God humbling him in heart and mind, that gave him the truly loveable character he bore, and endeared him to Christian friends both far and near. He was born in 1824 at Gestingthorpe in Essex, and was Curate of Bradford St. Clare in Suffolk, from 1851 to 1856, in which year he resigned his Fellowship on accepting the vicarage of Wymeswold, where he continued to the end of his days.

Taken away from the scene of his labours when

years of chastening had mellowed his spirit and filled him with humility and love, may we not say his loss is to many irreparable? When faithful men are few, the loss of one is greater than can well be measured; yet let us remember it was the same Lord who gave him life and a ministry to fulfil, that in mercy and love to His own, and in correction, has now seen fit to remove him.

We should like to have been permitted to follow our departed brother throughout the path of the Lord's gracious dealings with him more perfectly than the records he has left enable us now to do. Amidst the cares of a family and of a populous parish he had little time for writing, yet well he knew that true Christian experience is always to the praise of Christ, and that in it the work of the Holy Spirit is magnified; and therefore it was that both in his private letters, and in his printed Addresses to his parishioners every new year, he dwelt freely on the things which he had heard, and looked upon, and handled of the Word of Life.

From these sources we must gather such fragments as may seem best suited to exhibit his inward life and ministerial exercises, sensible that no words can so adequately set forth his experience, or afford so true a testimony to the grace given him, as his own.

Speaking of his life at college Mr. Walker has remarked how his love of learning kept him entirely from many of the evils and temptations that surround young men; but he was at that time ignorant of the experimental power of *religion,* and he was no stranger to the tempta-

tions to scepticism which, owing to the innate unbelief of the natural heart, are so frequently engendered by that very learning.

We extract the following passages on the subject of his deliverance from these temptations, from a letter Mr. Walker wrote in reference to the sceptical errors of the day. It was printed in *The Record*, October 1862, under the title 'Faith the Gift of God,' and afterwards in the *Oxford Chronicle* under the title 'Science will not convert the heart,' and finally revised and reprinted by Mr. Walker himself. In it he says:—'I am myself a monument of the delivering power and mercy of God in this very matter. . . . My own history was just this:—I had read and studied deeply in mathematics, had mastered every fresh subject I had entered upon with ease and delight; had become accustomed (as every exact mathematician must do) to investigate and discover fundamental differences between things which seem to the uninitiated one and the same; had seen my way into physical astronomy and the higher parts of Newton's immortal "Principia," and had been frequently lost in admiration of his genius till St. Mary's clock warned me that midnight was past three hours ago. I had, in fact (as we say), made myself master of dynamics, and become gradually more and more a believer in the unlimited capabilities of my own mind! This self-conceited idea was only flattered and fostered by eminent success in the Senate House, and by subsequently obtaining a Fellowship at Trinity, and enjoying very considerable popularity as a mathematical lecturer.

'It would have spared me many an hour of misery in after days had I really felt what I so often said, viz., that the deeper a man went in science, the humbler he ought to be, and the more cautious in pronouncing an independent opinion on a subject he had not investigated, or could not thoroughly sift. But, though all this was true, I had yet to learn that this humility in spiritual things is never found in a natural man.

'I took orders, and began to preach, and then, like the Bishop among the Zulus, I found out the grand deficit in my theology. I had not the Spirit's teaching myself, and how could I without it speak "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"?

'In vain did I read Chalmers, Paley, Butler, Gaussen, etc., and determine that, as I had mastered all the other subjects I had grappled with, so I would the Bible, and that I would make myself a believer. I found a poor ignorant old woman in my parish more than a match for me in divine things. I was distressed to find that she was often happy in the evident mercy of the Lord to her, and that she found prayer answered, and that all this was proved sincere by her blameless and harmless walk amongst her neighbours, whilst I, with all my science and investigation, was barren, and unprofitable, and miserable—an unbeliever in heart, and yet not daring to avow it, partly from the fear of man, but more from a certain inward conviction that all my sceptical difficulties would be crushed and leaped over by the experience of the most illiterate Christian.

'I was perfectly ashamed to feel in my mind like Voltaire, Volney, or Tom Paine. I could claim no originality for my views; and I found they were no comfort, but a constant source of misery to me.

'May we not compare this kind of state to that which God speaks of in Jer. xlix.—"Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart"? And observe what follows: "Hear the counsel of the Lord. . . . Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out."

'It may now be asked how I came ever to view Divine truth differently. I desire to ascribe all praise to Him to whom power belongeth; I desire to put my own mouth in the dust, and be ashamed, and never open my mouth any more, because of my former unbelief. I cannot describe all I passed through, but I desire with humility and gratitude to say, that I was made willing in a day of Christ's power. He sweetly melted down my proud heart with His love; He shut my mouth for ever from cavilling at any difficulties in the written Word; and one of the first things in which the great change appeared was, that whereas beforetime preaching had been misery, now it became my delight to be able to say, without a host of sceptical or infidel doubts rushing into my mind, "Thus saith the Lord." Oh, I am quite certain no natural man can see the things of God; and I am equally certain he cannot make himself do so. "It was the Lord that exalted Moses and Aaron," said Samuel; and "By the grace of God I am what I am," said St. Paul; and so, in a modified and humble sense, I can truly say.

'It used to be a terrible stumbling-block to me to find so many learned men, so many acute men, so many scientific men, infidels. It is not so now; I see that God has said, "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble;" I see as plainly as it is possible for me to see anything, that no natural man can receive the things of the Spirit of God. Hence I expect to find men of this stamp of intellect coming out boldly with their avowals of unbelief in the written Word of God. The only answer I can give to them is, "God has in mercy taught me better;" and never do I sing those beautiful words in the well-known hymn, but I feel my eyes filling with tears of gratitude to the God of all compassion,—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wand'ring from the fold of God."

'So it was with me; so it must be with any one of them, if ever they are to know the truth in its power, or to receive the love of the truth that they may be saved.

'I feel very much for the young of this generation, remembering the conflicts I passed through in consequence of the errors of men of ability. I hope the Lord will graciously impress on many hearts the serious truth of the words, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit;" and, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." My own way of explaining it to myself and others, when required to do so, is by saying, It is not through the medium of a cultivated intellect, but through new affections, that the soul

receives true religion; "Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."'

Again in another letter to *The Record*, dated Jan. 30, 1863, entitled 'Rationalism unphilosophical,' we find the following striking remarks:

'Is proud man able to bow so low as to receive upon trust all his principles in exact science, and yet when he comes to God's Word unable to bear the humiliation of believing that "the things which are impossible with men are possible with God"?

'Yet truly this is so. I remember how it was with myself, and I can feel very much for those who now stand where I did, and where, but for the grace of God, I still should stand. How exactly to the point is Paul's noble question to Agrippa,—"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Paul knew why; for he himself says in another place, "All men have not faith." Oh this Divine element of all true spiritual perception! How could Agrippa believe the power of God to raise the dead whilst his own soul was dead in sin? This is where the evil lies—natural faith is attainable by natural men, but it is only the spiritual man who can receive what is spiritual and requires Divine faith to apprehend it. This faith is God's gift; it is not the result of study, nor of merit, nor of anything else which we can naturally arrive at,—it is a free gift,—and the man who has it is often brought very low before God when he looks at his own pride, and yet hears

those humbling words, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" . . . . And whereas in days of ignorance he used to see no beauty in Christ, and nothing but foolishness in his Gospel, he now sees, as by a Divine intuition, that in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and he feels that in his own experience he knows Christ as "the power of God and the wisdom of God.'"

From these passages of Mr. Walker's writings we obtain some perception of that great work as wrought in him, which often leaves man wondering (with Nicodemus of old), 'How can these things be?' and concerning which the Lord has said, 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' Thus it was with him. We know not when nor how the light entered, but the inward conviction he speaks of that he with all his science and investigation was barren and unprofitable and miserable, and that all his sceptical difficulties would be crushed and leaped over by the experience of the most illiterate Christian, was, we may surely believe, a gracious conviction of the Spirit of God. For it is abundantly evident that the eye of the Lord was upon him, and His hand guided him, until we see him escaped from a thousand snares and temptations, sensible that the mercy of God and the power of God alone had delivered him. His perception of this mercy and power, and of the divine gift of faith necessary unto the right

apprehension of it, was as unctuous as it was clear and deep, pervading his whole life and ministry.

The following extracts from some of Mr. Walker's private letters throw further light upon his spiritual path:—

'*The Vicarage, Wymeswold,*
'*January* 2, 1863.

'My Dear Friend,—I was very much pleased at receiving your very kind letter. . . . Now, however, what can I say? I can only repeat that your case, so trying in an outward point of view, is very encouraging to me, and confirms my opinion of the motto, "God helps them that help themselves." I make the addition of one word, "God helps those who *cannot* help themselves." Truly I find no comfort elsewhere, and I perceive you do not.

'I was beginning my family, which now consists of three, when I first heard of your distressing affliction, by means of which the Lord sent you away "without purse, and scrip, and shoes," from your profession. I remember feeling deeply for you then, but how much more now. . . . I felt, however, then, and feel now, that God makes no mistakes, and there I leave it. The worst pain I ever suffer in my soul is from a spirit of the world. I am always lumbering about with Bunyan's muck-rake, but I get very few sticks and straws up with it after all.

'I must not say I envy you—this is not a proper word—but I must say I long for some of the same favour from the Lord. I remember your dear father-in-law told me about that blessed word being a comfort to you—"My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord." Truly, my dear friend, it was marrow and fatness to your soul, I know. One word from Him is worth all the counsels of all our friends put together; and more—it is life. Cowper's hymn, "By whom was David taught," has a blessed verse or two about this.[1] I am often very miserable, and the enemy knows how to buffet me with my former scepticism very painfully. But where is my help? Where yours is—that is, in the Lord Jesus Christ. I was much cheered at the mercy shown you in the 46th Psalm. O for such a ray of blessed light myself! During my sleepless feverish nights last week, those blessed words, Psalm xvi, "Thou wilt show me the path of life," were a little help to me; but I am so light and inconstant that my comfort never comes to what I want—the full manifestation of pardon through the Redeemer's blood.

'Yours very affectionately, ROBERT WALKER.'

'*Jan.* 23, 1863.

'. . . . I feel very great sympathy with two things you say, very specially about the help laid upon Him who is mighty. I was gardening one day, and I stopped to think what a poor unprofitable servant I was; and I was thinking what use

[1] Olney Hymns, xvii.

I ever made of Christ's intercession and His office as Saviour of His people, when my mind seemed at once directed to this, "I have laid help upon One that is mighty." What I saw from it was this, that if I could be always profitable, and always in the frame I desired to be in, a mighty Saviour would not be needed by me. In fact, I saw that "help" means the entire salvation of the Lord's people; and I trust I have been enabled (for it is a gift) to cast my burden of guilt there sometimes since. I never get any comfort from viewing the excellences of creatures. I am often filled with pain and fear to see their self-satisfaction, but I never feel the least hope of being a better man, as some hold out to their flocks.'

'*June* 27, 1871.

'. . . . I received your account of the last end in this world of my very valued counsellor and friend, Mr. Gilpin. . . . I have now no man on earth whom I am at all tempted to call my father. I could not but regard him as such in a peculiar manner. When I wrote to him I was sure to receive a gentle caution, or a godly counsel, or some scriptural consolation under some trial with which I might be exercised. There was a ripeness of judgment which always commanded my respect, and a tenderness and sympathy which enlisted my affection towards him.[1] But as we

[1] See 'Letters to a Clergyman,' in 'Memorials of the Life and Ministry of Bernard Gilpin, formerly Rector of St. Andrew's, Hertford.' *Houlston and Sons.*

get older, God removes these beloved props, that we may rest more exclusively on Himself, and view Christ as more and more our All—that is, our Righteousness, our Strength, and our Counsellor. It is a very blessed thing to view Him as ours, and all His benefits as ours. His life and goodness, His death and resurrection and present mediation, as ours. I do not often get so high as this, but I can truly say it is my happiest moment when I can ascend to this blessed point, and find rest there.'

'*Sept.* 16, 1872.

'. . . . My chief desire is still to be a poor publican, and not a holy Pharisee, and yet in saying this how gladly would I have a righteousness exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.

'I was preaching yesterday on these words, "Upon This Rock I will build My church." How clearly I seemed to see that the living Rock is Christ alone, and how deeply did I feel, and still do, that this is a difficult point to come to. There is so much self-righteousness and self-strength still in our conceit (I speak for myself) that I am perfectly amazed and confounded when I really see I must give up all creature hopes, whether in myself or in the saints of God. I have greatly and painfully missed my dear friend's truly godly correspondence; but I think that shows—among some harmless things, such as my love of his lucid style, etc.—a degree of leaning on an arm of flesh.'

'*Oct.* 23, 1874.

'I have been meditating with pain and sorrow of heart over this popular Perfectionist religion. Alas! can you believe that a man who says he has arrived at a state in which all his temptations come from without, and none from within, has ever seen the true state, or even an approximation to the true state, of his heart? I cannot. I think, poor man, he must be very very ignorant of what passes within, and must ignore what he does know. He talks about quenching all the fiery darts of Satan by the shield of faith. Well. But suppose he did this, and I should think he hardly does even so much, but we will suppose this done—What becomes of the surging evils and corruptions from within? And has he the wit to know when these begin to work? for I can never find that out. I find out when I am ill, but I cannot find out when I begin to be ill. Another thing strikes me, Do they know Christ? If so, how wonderful that they should make so much fuss about their own holiness, and say so very little about His incomparable and glorious holiness. (Contrast S. Rutherford.)

'Whilst I was turning these things over the other day I was suddenly led to Psalm xxiv., "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" and I saw at once that this is a prophecy of Christ ascending up as King of Glory, after having shown Himself mighty in battle in conquering our foes. And why did He ascend up? It says in Hebrews, "Now to appear in the presence of God FOR US." Here then is our "clean heart," "pure hands," a soul not lifted up to vanity, and

a true tongue. I think a true glimpse of this would take the shine out of our poor "holiness through faith" at once.'

'*Jan.* 20, 1875.

'I quite sympathise with your observation about the hindrance our evil hearts are to the comfortable exercise of grace, but I had a view the other day which comforted my soul. I saw I had misused everything God had ever given me, and was beginning to feel very dark and despairing, when this crossed my soul, 'A man is not accepted for his good use of God's gifts, but for Christ's righteousness.' This may seem a very trite observation, but it came to me with all the force of a new one.'

'*Feb.* 19, 1876.

'. . . . I often pray that I may "never despair." I remember a song, the end of every verse of which was, "Nil desperandum. I'll never despair!" And I remember walking with a friend on the esplanade at Blackpool while a capital singer was roaring it out to the music of a band, and I remember my friend saying, "How little does that man consider what he is singing! How truly do I trust he never may despair." I did not then, in 1861, know quite what he meant; but since then I have had many most gloomy tastes of that horror. I never find any remedy till the Lord somehow seems (as I express it) to *lift me up to a purer atmosphere than my own works, either good* or bad. These blessed helps

you too know, as I see from your letter; but if I can enter into your experience here, how truly can I into that which refers to your public assistance and private desolation! Alas! alas! I sometimes think of what St. Augustine says: "I know not whether any of the clergy will be saved." It is very painful to me—it has been my experience for many years—I should have been ashamed to say so had not a living brother like yourself expressed the same.

'I had a sweet exception to this misery last Monday, for my text, Romans iv. 8, abode with me through Monday and Tuesday very happily; but I knew it was melting away, and now much of the power has gone. It seems strange to draw comfort from such a consideration, but I really found much comfort from considering that it seemed a much less thing for the Lord not to impute sin to any sinner, than for Him to free *me* from the imputation. The guilt of sin did not seem to remain upon me, and yet it seemed a grand thing to have the least hope it was really removed by being imputed to Christ.

'I can understand what you say of prayer, and I hope I sometimes pray; but I do not find prayer a work of the flesh or mere lip-labour. Doubtless it is true still, "Ye have not, because ye ask not." How busy has Satan been of late in trying to render prayer, holiness, faith, and everything truly precious, contemptible! . . . . I sympathise with you about —— and ——. I call them very temperate and very wise men, and they say *some* very true things, but they are all *a little free-willed*, which pains us who are among

the scattered, bruised, broken, lame, and lost sheep. No encouragement which takes for granted our power to do this or that gives us the smallest hope. It is rather thus:—if we can but come low enough, if we can but be poor enough, and can but be sufficiently destitute to need Christ and to cry to Him, all will one day be well. "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and He will exalt you in due time." '

Allusion has been made to the addresses in which, year by year, Mr. Walker was led to seek the good of those among whom he laboured. The writing of these was evidently a part of his ministry. In them he frequently drew out his soul to the spiritually hungry of his congregation, and affectionately and faithfully warned both young and old. These addresses were read and appreciated by many in distant places, who loved the writer for the truth's sake. Many of them are remarkable for clear and unctuous statement of doctrine and experience, an unflinching avowal of the truths of eternal election, redemption, effectual calling and final perseverance of the saints; but always in the spirit of these lines:—

"No dry doctrine will suffice:
Broken hearts and humble walkers,
These are dear in Jesu's eyes."

And therefore it was when enforcing the doctrines of grace, he loved to dwell on the grace of the doctrines.[1] His endeavour was always to make

[1] *A Tract entitled* 'The Doctrines of Grace and the Grace of *the Doctrines*' *was* published by Mr. Walker in 1873.

prominent what is of value in religion, accounting above all things precious what God Himself bestows on humble souls—a word of scripture, a gospel truth, sealed home on the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit—some divine impress whereby, in life, love, and power, the soul is renewed in strength.

In making extracts from writings, so good and profitable, and yet where from the nature of them the same ground is repeatedly taken up, it is difficult to know where to begin and where to leave off, and there must of necessity be some repetition. In the main, those portions have been chosen, as more suitable for this memoir, that more especially bear on the writer's personal experience in the things of God.

From the 'New Year's Address,' 1868.

'. . . . I dare not try to *explain away* such a passage as Eph. i. 4, 5. I learn from it that, *before the fall of man*, God the Father chose out a people for His glory, and to be His children —that God the Son undertook for them, and in due time came to save them by His blood-shedding. That in these highly favoured people the Holy Ghost works, and in due time calls them effectually to salvation, and seals them, as it says, v. 13, applying the promises of God to them with power. I learn, moreover, that these are the people who were redeemed by the blood of Christ, and who are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," and who will certainly all be *finally and eternally* saved.

". . . . I have seen and still do see such utter helplessness and wickedness and such "a sink of sin" in my own fallen nature, that I am convinced (as far as I myself am concerned) I never should have had one good thought, nor could I have been moved thereto by any motion of my own heart, nor by any human persuasion. "Whence then cometh [heavenly] wisdom, and where is the place of understanding?" Surely we must acknowledge, and I do from my heart acknowledge, it cometh only from God, and that in a way of sovereignty, of free grace, and, as the Scripture says, "according to election." If I had ever found a power in myself to do good things with a good motive, and to love and desire what is good and spiritual, then I might have been puzzled what interpretation to put upon the verses I have alluded to, but I never could and never did love anything holy and spiritual till (as I have reason to believe) my heart was effectually changed by a divine power external to myself. And in saying this I must add that I believe I honestly *tried* to be very religious, and actually did attain to a high degree of moral virtue, as the world esteems it, and valued myself highly thereupon too; but none can tell but those who have felt it the difference between all this and one drop of the love of Christ mightily constraining us to live to Him and not to ourselves. The first passage which brought me to acknowledge the sovereignty of God in the election of a people for His name was in Joshua, the last chapter, the 2nd and 3rd *verses—especially* the 3rd. O how clearly I saw *from these words* that God chooses and calls whom

He will, and that He never leaves whom once He loves. . . . I do not hold Calvinistic doctrine (as it is called) out of mere theory, nor can I tolerate a bitter, quarrelsome, controversial spirit in dealing with these deep and unfathomable mysteries. It is still with me a *practical and experimental* doctrine, and I never get help any other way than by being brought to fall down where there is no human helper; then I am compelled to cry to the Lord in my trouble, and (blessed be His name) He saveth me out of all my distresses.'

FROM THE 'NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS,' 1872.

'. . . . If there is one point on which I become more and more deeply convinced, and in which I get more and more help and comfort from above, it is this, "*Salvation is of the Lord.*" I see it in every page of Scripture—I see it in every age of the church—and I see it in every believer's history—yea, even in the experience of those who think this a dangerous doctrine. I believe more firmly than ever that every soul who enters heaven owes his salvation to the eternal covenant purpose of Jehovah, Father Son and Holy Spirit—that every part of his history, from the cradle to the grave, was planned and arranged in an everlasting covenant, "ordered in all things and sure"—that he was saved in the purpose of God from eternity—that his sins were really all atoned for when Jesus said, "It is finished"—and that the time of his coming to *know this*, and *feel* his sins forgiven, was *fixed* in the eternal purpose and everlasting *covenant* of God before the world began.

believe that this is all plainly *revealed* in the word of God, and that it is the duty of gospel ministers to feed the people of God by bringing forward these foundation truths again and again in their ministry. . . .

'But whilst I say all this, let me add, it is not the holding of this truth *in the head* that will save us; you know, my dear brethren, we want it more and more engraven *on the heart*. Happy the soul who can unfeignedly use this language:—

> "A debtor to mercy alone,
> Of covenant mercy I sing;
> Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,
> My person and offering to bring."'

From the 'New Year's Address,' 1873.

'. . . . Value and esteem above all other things in your religion, anything which evidently comes *direct from God* and is written in your heart by *experience*. Often when we least expect it, the Lord comes in with some passage of the word, and applies it by His Spirit to our own case, and makes a vivid impression on our hearts; or, it may be, some solemn occurrence among our neighbours humbles us, and shows us the hand of God powerfully and manifestly, and we feel Him to be *near*; or, which is best of all, we somehow have a clear and realizing sense of the love, mercy, majesty, and divine dignity and compassion of Jesus, our God-Man mediator; we have a sort of living and feeling appreciation of what He is, *and wish we* could always think so of Him. *Well, these* are to my mind the jewels of a

Christian; they evidently come from above, and they are proofs that we are favoured of God, and have found grace in His sight. They may be *few*, and usually are so in the experience of most believers, but they are his jewels, and I cannot but think they are *the only things* which will remain with him in the hour of trial and death.

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

Dear friends, value and prize a *feeling* religion. . . .

'What we really want is not new views and new doctrines, and a new translation of the Bible, and new modes of worship. No, indeed! but *the dear old truths* which Abraham believed so blessedly on that bright star-light night when his God "brought him forth abroad," newly and freshly stamped upon *a new heart*. If we get this, we shall not want to alter this passage and that of the Bible, or to prove anything new and questionable about heaven or hell, or man's lost state, or the value of his merits, or any such stuff; we shall "see light in God's light," and shall not need that any man teach us, for "the same anointing will teach us of all things."—1 *John* ii. 27. For my own part, I would rather have a revival of one glimpse of "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," "so as I have seen Him in the sanctuary," than know the exact meaning of every Hebrew word in the Bible whilst my heart continued cold and dead. . . .

'As we get older in the Christian race, our religion *solidifies* (if I may so say) and goes into a smaller compass; but it retains every really valuable *quality* it ever had; it becomes more private,

and less public; more deep, and less wide; more useful, and less noisy; more settled, and less easily shaken "by every wind of doctrine;" and we acquire a habit (if I may so express it) of expecting less and less from the world, and more and more from our Saviour and King. Hence disappointments in the world are less distracting to us, and though our pride is as great as ever, it is not quite so easily wounded as it used to be. Religion condenses down into "receiving and enjoying," "fighting and conquering,"

"Strong in the strength which God supplies,
Through His beloved Son."

The world *cannot* see these conflicts, but it *should see* the fruit of them.

'Denominational distinctions fade away like objects in the distance. We seem to outlive them. Once they were close to us, looked large and important, and we expected a great deal more from men of some special party in the church of God than from others; but ten, twenty, or thirty years of experience makes these things seem very small. The question with us is not, Do you belong to my church? but, Do you know my Saviour? Do you belong to Christ?—Mark ix. *v.* 41.'

Whilst affectionately addressing the young on the subject of religious excitement, Mr. Walker in his 'New Year's Address' for 1876, writes:—

'. . . Which students at Cambridge get on and come out high in honours? Those who are always *first at one lecture* and then at another? By no *means. But those* who study hard in their own

rooms, and learn what they learn *correctly*. Believe me, my dear young friends, one or two foundation truths *learnt, i.e.*, truly grounded in the soul by the power of the Holy Ghost, and learnt *experimentally*, will stand you more in stead than weeks of public meetings, however thrilling and exciting the "gospel addresses" (as they are now called) may be. If you come to know experimentally two things; 1. The *real ingrain evil* of your nature; and 2. That Christ is the Friend of sinners, and that He is *your* Friend—if, I say, you come to feel a little of *the power* of these two great truths in your hearts, it will do more to establish and ballast your souls in the midst of an ensnaring world, than all the addresses of public meetings put together. I am not speaking now without understanding what I say; the two great truths I have above pointed out have abode by me in some storms which threatened my ruin, and have been to me as Jacob's staff. An abiding sense of the first lessens the dismay which a fresh discovery of sin in our hearts occasions; the second is an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. The good Lord help and guide you! He only knows perfectly how to do so. They that seek Him early shall find Him. One word more. Study—yes, study the Bible! It is God's inspired Word. I have read it through and through by rule exactly for a quarter of a century, and I dare venture to say you may *trust it* when all the philosophers and secularists in Europe have, as they think, proved it false. Yes, I dare to say as John Bunyan so well affirmed two hundred years ago, "*Every* jot and tittle of that book stands

firmer than heaven and earth." My last word to you is, young people, read, value, and *study* that dear old-fashioned book—the Bible!

'I now come to my happiest task, if I may so call it, viz. my attempt to speak a word of comfort and encouragement to the dear saints of God.

'Dear friends and brethren, I know you do not expect any "new thing" from me, and I do not feel desirous to invent any, for, to say the truth, my inventive faculties do not improve as years flow by, and I hope my religious knowledge (which I once thought very great) is beginning to consolidate down into a more compact and trustworthy, though smaller bulk than in years gone by. It seems rather a poor result to arrive at when we merely regard the words, but a very blessed one when we understand the meaning, to say, as good old John Newton said, "I used when a young man to think I knew many things; now I am old I find I only know two, viz. that I am a very great sinner, and that Jesus Christ is *my Saviour.*" Dear brethren, *you* do not think it a small or light matter to say Jesus Christ is *my* Saviour. To hear the light and frothy professors of the day talk of "*my* dear Jesus," and "*my* blessed Saviour," and "*my* God," one would think every man had got thus far—but a poor "driven," "scattered," "lost sheep" (as God calls His people in Ezekiel xxxiv.) cannot rise so high as to claim this blessed covenant relationship just when he thinks proper. God is my witness (you will pardon my naming myself, *I do not do it* willingly, but I wish to speak the *real truth) that I* esteem those my "golden hours"

when I can humbly hope and humbly say, with some feeling sense of the power of it, that Jesus is *my* Saviour. . . . Religion abounds now, high Church, low Church, broad Church, religious Dissent, political Dissent, and endless advocates for false doctrine, a few for true doctrine, some clamouring for "a higher life," others for "universal charity," some for "perfection" itself—and in each case there are warm partisans for and against, and yet all *very religious* people. But what is all this Babel to a child of God? He withdraws from it; he cannot hear the voice of Christ in this fierce religious contention. The voice he loves to hear says to him, "Come apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast;" and his reply is, "Under the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." . . . A little divine insight into the covenant of grace, power from above given us to see Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the New Testament saints to be all men of *one faith*, and to feel that ours is the same, and comes from the same Giver; clear experimental evidence that *the same God* condescends to commune with us as communed with Jacob at Luz, and in Syria, and as he was going down into Egypt—some small sympathy with Daniel, when his very "comeliness was turned into corruption" at the appearing of Christ, and with Isaiah when he cried out, "I am undone," for I have seen the *Lord.* I say a little of this "doing business in

great waters" will make us clearer and more distinct in true spiritual knowledge than any course of human study of theology. The believer thus taught, and thus truly *humbled*, will not dare to cavil at God's election of His people before the world began, for it will be experimentally clear to him that such is his utter depravity that it *must* have been *God's act*, and not his own, to quicken his soul to life. Besides he will have, by and by, if not now, some evidence that he is himself interested in this divine election unto *life eternal*.

'And so it will be with every other truth; he will not want any proof by laboured argument that perfection in this life is unattainable; he will know experimentally that when he would do good, evil is present with him. He will not want to read long chapters of confusion and endless mazes of dangerous mystery to answer the question whether the 7th of Romans refers to St. Paul as an unconverted or a converted man, he will *know* that what St. Paul says in that chapter is his own experience now he is converted, and that it was *not so* when he was unconverted—hence the knotty problem, as some seem to consider it, is solved at once.

'And as to "final perseverance," as it is called, he will not only read this in endless blessed promises in the Bible, but he will gather inward assurance that it shall be so with himself; he is not better than he was, he is not stronger than he *was*, he has not in his flesh any good thing any *more now than* formerly—but his faith grows *and increases*, and his acquaintance with Christ

gathers more and more life and form about it; and the more he knows of "the faithful and true Witness," the "Amen," the more he gathers for certain that whom He once loves He loves to the end (John xiii.). His language is

> "And can He have taught me to trust in His name
> And thus far have brought me, to put me to shame?"

This is how what are called "the doctrines of grace" are learnt by God's true people, and they do not dare to think they know anything aright or "as they ought to know," except they learn it thus, to wit, *experimentally.*'

From the 'New Year's Address,' 1879.

'. . . When I read the ancient godly writers, such as Bunyan, Owen, Gurnal, Sibbes, and the protestant martyrs who immediately preceded them, I am struck with the contrast between their sober, serious, lucid, God-honouring style, and the extreme confusion between our work and God's in the writers of the present day who are nevertheless called Evangelical. The difference seems to me to be this—the old writers held and preached that true religion begins with God, and they encouraged their hearers who were religious to expect to receive somewhat from Him *now* in this life, and that they should be able to honour Him in proportion to what *He gave them.* We never hardly hear a word of this now—it is considered a dangerous view, savouring of enthusiasm, and leading to antinomianism, and licentiousness! *Woe unto us!* May we not almost say, "O Israel,

thy prophets are like the foxes in the desert," etc. (See Ezek. xiii). The consideration of this has led me to endeavour in my ministry to dwell much on every glimpse of divine teaching which I hope I find for myself, or see in any of you. Value one touch of the Divine Teacher's gentle but mighty instruction above gold and precious stones —yea above all the good works that ever were performed by good men. Our XIIth Article says says well, "Good works spring out of a *lively* faith," *i.e.* a *living* faith; and may we not add a living faith is the work of the Holy Ghost in the sinner's heart? Hence the stress to be laid on His work, and the value to each child of God of every touch of His Almighty and all-wise hand. He it is that makes the followers of Christ resemble their Saviour in being "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." Now my belief is that there are many dear children of God who have some of these "jewels" in their possession, but have been so badly instructed by ignorant teachers that they can never derive from them that comfort they are so admirably calculated to administer. My endeavour is to avoid this error by all means. When this heavenly Teacher shines upon the word and "brings the truth to sight," how fast we learn! When He withdraws, what a sealed book the Bible is! Again when this Divine Teacher softens and humbles our spirit, how right, how "holy and just and good," appear all God's ways! When He is withdrawn, we read God's providence just as ignorantly as *His Word;* and from the rebellion of our own *hearts we may* easily understand why wicked men

are what we find them to be. (See Psalm xxxvi. 1.) Hence I never expect to find any good in any man who is without grace, and I am prepared to find many blemishes in truly good men. The sins and falls of God's people in the Bible must appear a perfect paradox to those who regard religion as a gradual process of improvement in the natural man. Whereas to those who believe that true religion begins with "the new birth," and is sustained by Divine grace in spite of the old sinful nature that still remains, "yea, in them that are regenerated" (Art. IX.), it is exactly what they would expect to find. Yet these are the very people who by grace are "the light of the world," and "the salt of the earth" (Matt. v.). We should have thought, and many actually do think, that the way to keep people holy and watchful would be to threaten them with the constant danger of "falling away"; but we find exactly the contrary method used by the Apostle, who told the Philippians he was confident that "He who had *begun* a good work in them would *perform it* until the day of Jesus Christ." In truth, all systems of religion which dwell much on the value of the good works done by good men, go upon the false supposition that there remain still in man by nature some germs of good, which, if carefully nourished up, may produce true godliness in him; in other words, they seem not to be aware that the fall of man sowed the seeds of ruin in every part of his nature, bodily, mental and spiritual alike.

'On this account, *i.e.* because I believe the Holy *Ghost teaching* us of Jesus is the only source of

righteousness and true holiness, I love in my ministry to dwell on His work. I know the objections raised against it, and I have seen the lives and ends of some of those who have been the most forward to condemn it—and I must declare again and again, I think the spirit of those objections, and the characters of the leading objectors, are the strongest confirmations of the value of the very truth they despise. I have seen many truly godly persons whose lives and conversation have been a credit to their profession, and have found them all, without any exception, debtors to mercy alone; whilst I cannot say I ever found true holiness where self-confidence and self-righteousness have been the mainspring of religion. My dear friends, pray more, watch more, and join absolute distrust of your own deceitful hearts with absolute confidence in the grace of God, and you will find He gives you grace to walk uprightly and consistently. Holy living springs from a living union with a Holy God, through a Holy Saviour, whose ways are unfolded to us by the Holy Ghost.

I am afraid some of this is rather confused; but as I am deeply sensible of the truth of the IXth Article of our Church, and have some happy sense of the excellent new wine of the kingdom of God which is contained in XIth and XVIIth Articles, I wish to encourage others to look for the same firm ground of confidence. Happy is the soul that can truly enter into the spirit of that beautiful hymn of Toplady's:—

"A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,
My person and offering to bring."

and the remaining verses.

'I have been for upwards of twenty-seven years a preacher of the Gospel, and I have come in contact with a great variety of different characters, and I must say all I have seen without, and all I have felt within, strongly confirms me in the opinion of Jonah, after he had done his best to secure the judgment of God against him, but found the inward softening and humbling influence of the Holy Ghost within his heart, instead of the terrible condemnation which he so truly merited—"Salvation is of the Lord."

'Can it then be wondered at that, if I have anything at all to say on religious subjects, it should be in praise of free, unmerited, sovereign grace?

'Perhaps some will read this who are ministers themselves. If so, it may encourage them to hear the ministerial experience of one of their brethren through so long a period as I have named above; and, dear brethren, forgive me if I seem a little egotistical, for we can only "speak that we do know," and testify that which we have ourselves seen. [John iii. 11.]

'Well, then—for my first remark—I have found my Lord and Master Jesus Christ the very kindest, most helpful, most patient, and most enduring Master. What histories could I give of His unnumbered mercies to me! What accounts of His kindness, of His forbearance, when my sins have

called for strokes! Of His gracious assistance in my work when I have been almost at my wits' end what to do next! Of his tender compassion in relieving my bodily suffering sometimes on the Lord's-day! We talk of miracles having ceased, but I think my brethren will be able to confirm my words when I say I often find Him still working miracles, "for God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth" (Ps. lxxiv. 12). And as to His *enduring* us with much long suffering, when we provoke Him by our stupidity and perverseness, what can we say sufficiently honourable? And of His condescending to give a blessing on our feeble and confused and ignorant preaching, what shall we say? For myself, my experience during all the years I have preached has been, that those sermons which I have been most ashamed of have been most useful to others, and that I have been often reduced to being sensibly to myself "a fool, that I might be wise" (1 Cor. iii. 18). And how weighty have those words often been to me, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. iv. 7). Also, I think, we may see that our ministry is a part of that "government" which is "upon Christ's shoulder"; for how often have preachers tried their very best to meet some believer's case, or to shed light upon some difficulty, or to bring home conviction to some heart, and utterly failed; whereas some day when they are only "drawing *the bow* at a venture," the arrow lights with *Divine power* and certainty upon some heart they *little intended*. . . .

'I must make one more remark. The holy apostle Paul says, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Now I think very few other men ever learnt that lesson as he had learnt it; yet some of us have a clearer glimpse than others of his meaning. For myself, I think I see a little of the path which led him to it, and I will put it thus—Why should we be afraid to be brought low? We all dread and avoid it by all means and every artifice we can devise. But why should we do so? We are not nearly so much afraid of prosperity, which is a far more dangerous condition. It seems to me that this points to a lurking motive of self-seeking and pride. For if it was God's honour that we steadily and honestly sought, why should we not be as well satisfied to be the instruments of promoting that honour whilst humbled and kept low ourselves, as when we are personally in a more prosperous and flourishing condition? Have I really learnt a part of this lesson, or do I only think I have done so, when I say, "*Never be afraid to be brought low?* My experience has been, "I was brought low, and He helped me." "He giveth grace to the lowly." When God in His providence calls a minister to perform any work for Him, and at the same time seems to bring him low, and, as we should say, unfit him for that work, then is the time to look out for His effectual help. "I will help thee" is then His gracious word to His poor servant. How often have I found this! O the times I have gone into the pulpit empty, and stripped of all *knowledge*, power, and understanding, and every-

thing fitted to encourage my hope of a blessing! How often have I, at such times, come down covered with confusion and shame, begging pardon for my stupidity and presumption! But I can scarcely remember an instance of this but what the Lord has blessed the word to some poor soul among my hearers. Now, what lesson should a minister learn from this? Surely to *trust* more, and to be less afraid of being *brought low*. I fancy the real fact is, we think if the vessel is well filled with our own preparation, our own learning, our own diligence, our own clear view of the subject, and so on, all must prosper; then, to show us that all this, *by itself*, will avail nothing, the Lord comes in and puts dishonour upon it all. On the contrary, when we have been humbled, brought low, and emptied of self, as it is expressed, the Lord graciously pours in a little of His divine treasure, and we are enabled to pour it out for the edification of His people, for His glory, but *not for our own*. This thought has sometimes reconciled me to very humbling dispensations. But let no one suppose I imagine I have fully learnt *even this small part* of Paul's lesson; still, let ministers aim to learn it, and they will find the Great Teacher very kind in helping them. He says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."'

In reference to this address Mr. Walker writes:—

'*Jan.* 25, 1879.

'I am very thankful you like my poor little *scrambling* address. It was written in intervals

of Greek and Algebra, etc., with my dear boys. . . . But I know it had one special charm (to me), and that was, it was all true. Poor as the account it gives of my ministry is, it is true, and my experience is as stated there. Very humbling is this, but it corresponds with the words "earthen vessels."

'How deeply do I sympathise with you both in the trials I know you allude to. Unbelief is a grievous proof of our lost estate. The very fact that we sooner believe our own fallen reason than the unerring wisdom of God is a proof of a fallen state.'

In other letters of the same year he refers to some peculiar exercises of soul:—

'*March* 13, 1879.

'. . . . For myself I have been very ill with influenza, brought lower than ever in my life that I can remember. I sunk also very low in my feelings, and had the "sentence of death" most thoroughly in mind, body and soul. It was a very dark time with me. All my ministry flashed before me, and all my religion and "my comeliness was turned into corruption," and my religion looked like dust and ashes. You can hardly conceive anything so dreadful. So low did I fall one dark night that I kept sinking and sinking till I caught, as a person carried down a torrent catches at a rush by the side of the river-brink, at this word, "I will love them freely." Then I began to go down again till *this caught* me, "Happy is the man that hath

the God of Jacob for his help." But O it was dark work! I can only compare it to "a night and a day have I been in the deep." However, I found a very little power to hold on in desponding prayer; still reaching out to Christ. I hope the effect may be to keep me always looking to Him, through darkness and gloom, as well as when a ray of hope comes into my soul. I thought of all the cardinals and priests beginning to chant "*De profundis*" when they heard the Pope was dead, and it seemed too dreadful to bear to think of it. My prayer was really "*De profundis.*" . . .

'I think —— is quite right in his conclusions about the Lord's second coming, and I like his devout spirit: yet how different is the effect of his book from a letter of Huntington's, Mr. Bourne's, or Mr. Gilpin's; these last awe my spirit, and fill me with self-abasement, but not with despair, whereas the Arminian style always seems to hold out the hope of doing great things, and then leaves me out in the dreary desert of creature power, unable to begin, much less to finish. This is my experience. . . .

'I have been reading dear Mr. Gilpin's diary during the years I knew him, and I find he was no stranger to my sad fears, but he seems to mount higher than I ever do. I have been very thankful to see his pretty remarks to that dear suffering lady, about the Lord having given her a kid to "feed beside the shepherd's tents." I sometimes try to remember one or two He has given me, I trust. The power of them was such as to remove all desire to argue about, or explain any of the deep things of God.

'I also find a remark on p. 150, about a letter he wrote to me in 1861, where he says that, in setting forth the helplessness of the sinner, and the absolute need of Christ's blood, he was compelled to "prophesy in sackcloth." I think I understand this a very little. The majority of our hearers say, "Prophesy unto us smooth things," and as we cannot do this we seem to them as if clothed in sackcloth.

'Well, what a mass of egotism is here! Pardon it. Sometimes I have felt a little loosening of my bonds in reading the true account of a brother's depths, even where the deliverance has not been so clear as it should be. And I can feel in your last letter that you are or were passing through heavy things, and drinking the wine of astonishment in some degree, though not perhaps so heavily as I did last week. This has led me to think you might feel a little interest in hearing the truth about my state.

'I was in Cambridge about a month ago. There are some dear old friends of mine whom I love dearly as an academic myself. But the pulpits, as far as I can find, are going too much on man's power, and man's native worth. I am sure human nature does not need puffing up, especially in the dear young things who know so little of its evil. I felt very much to love them all, but was not able to preach as I was only there a very little while. . . .'

'*April* 16, 1879.

'. . . . I can feel the truths I have preached so long more vitally and sensibly than I ever did

before. And at times I seriously feel the need of Divine help. I must not say I never find any, for I have lately had one or two singular instances of being strong out of weakness, yet my sorrows return upon me. I seem to have come to the time when the clouds return after the rain, yet there is but one way still—"I am the way." I find it very difficult to come down (as we call it, though really it is our greatest honour) to own and confess my lost condition, and to wait for the help I need. What an ignorant man I am! Fancy, I have been a preacher nearly thirty years, and am still at the entrance of the strait gate!

'. . . . Your remarks about saying "a confederacy" are very abiding with me—"they stick like burrs," as Bunyan says . . . . Yet what can we say, I try in vain to show them what a deep experimental thing religion is to me, and that I don't value anything else in religion but what I can hope is from God himself. . . . No amount of learning, science, music, or decency and order, can make me like it if there is not a deep sense of need and poverty, and an urgent cry for mercy. This is how I try to set it out to them, but it is regarded as the most melancholy thing imaginable. I do feel very often that my own dreary spirit is in fault, yet I cannot forget the great and brave Apostle of the Gentiles, "serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations."'

'*Sep.* 13, 1879.

'. . . . *For* myself, I see in myself nothing *else but sin,* and in some instances I am truly

terrified to find its awful prevalency, but yet I find moments of tender compassion and forbearance from the Lord, which uphold a hope which I do trust He Himself has given me. . . .'

FROM THE 'NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS,' 1882.

'. . . . I hardly know, when so many things crowd in upon my memory in looking back upon the past year, which to speak of first. I have been led to thankfulness and praise many times during the year just gone by, and have been in very "desert places" as well. I hardly know what to say about it. David seems to express this in Psalm xxx—read verses 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11. What alternations do they express from sorrow to joy, then from joy into trouble again, and then from mourning to dancing! All this I have found again and again. This experience of "changes and war," as Job calls it, has led me to many thoughts. The first solid lesson I have learnt from it is this, *I get no better in myself.* As the hymn says:

> "My heart, no better than before,
> Is still to dreadful changes prone,
> *Then let me never trust it more.*"

Unless you are firmly settled in this truth, the dreadful evil of your own nature (as St. Paul says, "in my flesh dwelleth no good thing"), you never can be at rest in your soul. Every change will seem to cut you off from God. In a better frame you will be lifted up with pride, and in a worse *frame than* usual you will sink almost to the level

of despair. This must be so with every soul that is not truly and scripturally settled as to the inherent sinfulness of our nature. . . .

'Another passage fell with exceeding weight upon my soul two or three times last year, it was this: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." It corresponds in my mind to two others, "grace to help in time of need," and, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." These blessed promises have rejoiced my heart during 1881, on two or three separate occasions. You observe, my dear friends, they point not to any goodness or power of *ours*, but to the mercy, goodness, faithfulness and compassion of God our Saviour. That is what makes them so "amiable" (as David says, Psalm lxxxiv. 1) in my sight. To be a poor, timid, shrinking, helpless creature, with trouble, heart-trouble, staring me in the face; all strength gone, all sorts of obstacles opposing, my sins rising up before me, and ills I cannot see close upon me, and despair seeming to settle down on my soul; and then *all at once* to find my strength renewed, my heart encouraged, and my spirits aroused to undertake the trying work I am called to; and then to feel one discouragement after another vanishing, and one heartache after another giving way to hope and joy and confidence; and then to find all things well ordered after all my fears—this, I say, is enough to make any man sing the praise of his Redeemer. We cannot *foresee* this, we cannot here *walk by sight*, but I can testify to the glory of a pardoning and forgiving Saviour, that thus I have found it, more than once last year. O how we should glorify

God for such evident tokens of His love in Christ! Think what a small thing might have turned it all the other way! How, instead of rejoicing and being upheld and strengthened, we might have been (as we deserve) "swallowed up of overmuch sorrow"! Think how you were at such a time in God's hand, and He might easily have "taken vengeance of your inventions"! But, no, it was all mercy, all undeserved favour. Never forget this, O my soul! I hope you will forgive my seeming to speak so much of myself, but really it belongs to all God's poor children, for "the same afflictions," says St. Peter, "are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." And I am bound to add, the same gracious *deliverance*. . . .'

In a letter, dated May 16, 1882, Mr. Walker writes:—

'How true "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom"! Dear Lady Lucy Smith used to say, she wished the word "much" *could* be left out. But I must not join in this: though I am just now in a furnace to which I see no end. But the Lord knows I am dumb with silence because he has done it. I often think my time here may not be long, but I desire to leave all this, and only seek to have my lamp burning when the Lord comes. Then all will be well, I know.'

In December, the same year, he wrote the 'Address' to his parishioners for 1883, which proved to be his last. Read in the light which

the fulfilment of every blessed hope and expectation unto our sainted brother has now cast upon them, his utterances contained in this his dying testimony are very touching. Fully aware that he was suffering from a fatal malady, he traces in a beautiful manner the conflict of faith whereby in the prospect of death he was enabled to stay himself on the word of God, 'compassed about,' as the Apostle writes, 'with a great cloud of witnesses,' the sentence of death written upon the promise, yet the sure fulfilment of the promise when the time comes and God raises the dead. It is beautiful also to observe in his remarks how grace prepares the heart of the believer through a blessed anticipation leading him into such a divine contemplation of these things as changes him into the same image from glory to glory.

FROM THE 'NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS,' 1883.

'. . . . Why should I so shrink and shudder at the prospect of trials and of death? If I view these things in themselves they are evil, and if I try to fancy myself facing them in mine own strength they are terrible indeed. But why should I do so? Am I the Lord's? And has He led me thus far? Has He holden me by my right hand hitherto? And why must I now give way to terror, and, as Cowper says, "quit the field"? Nature says, you must. But grace teaches a different lesson. My mind was led very closely to look at this, and I saw the meaning of Psalm lxxiv. 16, "The day is thine, the night also is *thine,*" *in* rather an encouraging light. I felt

that if the Lord will be with us in "the night," that is, in the time of darkness, He can give us "songs," as Elihu says, even then. It says in Psalm cxxxix. 12, the darkness is no darkness unto Him. The whole matter then really resolves itself into this: Will the Lord be graciously *with me* when the storm falls upon me? And I believe He will, and if so, all will be easy, even in the dark. And I need not say, this is a great incentive to keeping as near to Him as we can all our journey through.

'Besides, I saw another verse in a very comforting light, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Faith in this word can make us smile through our tears, sometimes.

'I saw something about "the sentence of death," which St. Paul says he and his fellows had in themselves. I believe this "sentence of death" is of much more universal prevalence in the ways of God, than many of us think; for St. Paul says the effect of it was that they "should not trust in themselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." I think I see here, that wherever this sentence is written, it is intended to drive us to simply believing the word of God, and waiting on Him.

'I will mention one or two cases in Scripture where this sentence was written by God, and nothing could be done till God raised the dead. Take the promise given to our first parents that Christ should be born of a woman and bruise Satan's head. Was not that promise buried, and the sentence of death written upon it for 4000

years? Think what small glimmers of light beamed out again and again about it during that time, only to be put out (as it seemed) in obscure darkness. Jacob saw something of it, Gen. xlix. 10, and David saw glimpses of it, and then again all was dark. Yet when the fulness of the time was come, God raised the buried promise from the dead, and "sent forth His Son," Gal. iii. Again, think of the promise to Abraham, his seed to be like the stars of heaven, and like the dust of the earth. What became of this promise? It died and was buried, and the sentence of death was written upon it. And yet by and by all came to life. God raised the dead, and to-day we see the fufilment of it in the wonderful nation of the Jews scattered all over the world.

'Again, Joseph's dreams were promises of God to him. But what became of them? Psalm cv. says, "the word of the Lord tried him." Why? Because death was written upon all his hopes of ever seeing them fulfilled. Yet, when the time came, God raised the dead. See Gen. xli. 14 (margin), they "made him *run* out of the dungeon." Why, he had been shut up there for years, and yet when God's time comes he must actually *run* out! Oh, my friends, we are poor scholars in the lesson of faith!

'Again, Israel was to come out of Egypt with great substance. This promise was made to Abraham. How was the fact? They went there and were brought into bondage, and at last their afflictions were so cruel that their groans came up before God. He sent Moses to speak to Pharaoh *for* them, and they were worse off than ever. Yet

at the very time promised, the self-same night, they were brought triumphantly out with great substance. God raised the dead.

'Again, God had evidently promised Moses when a young man that he should be their deliverer, and acting upon this promise he went out and began in his own strength and wisdom. But with what result? He had to flee into Midian for 40 years, and live in obscurity. Death was written for all that time upon his promise. Yet we all know that by and by it was raised to life, and flourished so that all the world have heard of it.

'It was so with David having the kingdom over Israel. How long death was written upon this promise, and almost upon his own very self, till he said in a moment of despondency, "I shall certainly perish one day by the hand of Saul"! Yet when the time came all the difficulties vanished, and God raised the dead.

'I need not dwell upon other instances of this universal plan of God. He promises us great things, and we expect them to be fulfilled; and we shall never be disappointed. But we may, and I gather from what I have read in the Bible we *shall*, have many a heartache, and shed many a tear over what seems to us His "breach of promise." We may mourn over our dead promises with bitter grief, as no doubt Joseph and David did. But the bringing of the promise to life is not our work, and the sentence of death is written upon it that we should trust not in ourselves, but in "God who raiseth the dead."

'Many of God's tried people have special

promises in which God has caused them to hope in different trials and crises of their pilgrimage, and on almost every one of them a process similar to what I have described has been executed; yet at last they will all have to say, Nothing of the word of the Lord has fallen to the earth; all has come to pass.

'But we all have one promise in common, which is "the hope of Israel," as St. Paul calls it; I mean "the hope of the resurrection of the dead." This is an old promise early revealed to the saints, and spoken of by holy Job as an assured hope of his own heart. Yet what do we see all this time? We see that "wise men die, likewise the fool and brutish person." We see the godly and beloved members of Christ's church die, and their dust returns to the earth as it was. We see the dust of the righteous and the wicked mingled in indiscriminate confusion in the same burial ground, and we hear the taunting jeer of the scoffer, "Where is the promise of His coming?" And truly if we had no Scripture examples of the power of God to raise the dead, we might well be weary and faint in our minds. But we are living under a dispensation of faith—"The just shall live by faith"—and we should cheer up our hearts by the examples we find written in the Bible of how promises seemed forgotten in the eyes of unbelief, and to have even falsified themselves; and yet, when the time appointed by God came, all revived again and came to light, and every promise was fulfilled to the letter. And this "we believe and are sure," that when God's time comes "the earth *shall cast* out the dead." Those who have nothing

to lean upon but the bare promise of God, and can in no way help themselves, appear to the eye of sense in a very pitiable condition, but when we view their case with the eye of faith, theirs is the surest and safest security.

'I saw in Daniel's deliverance from the lions (Dan. vi.), a vivid and most touching picture of the very resurrection of the dead of which I have just spoken. Daniel was dear to the king. So is each believer to Christ. His enemies had contrived to secure that he should be cast to the lions, and be shut up in the den with them. So (in some way which is beyond our knowledge) the devil, in his enmity to Christ, has contrived to get the whole church laid under a common sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." . . . Persecution has committed many of the saints to this abode of ruin, and has thought they are for ever got rid of. But how is it in reality? The morning is coming when the king will come to the mouth of the den, and the same voice which said with authority, "Lazarus come forth," will call every one of them into light and life again. And mark the striking language—"No manner of hurt was found on him, because he believed in his God." What harm then has death done them? None They spent the night in the den indeed, but the "roaring lion" could not hurt them, because before God "innocency" was found in them. They were believers, and justified (or pronounced innocent), hence no manner of hurt is found on them, and their very death is called sleeping in Jesus. . . .

'My mind has also been directed on several

occasions to *the end* of this world. . . . To a Christian's mind there are many evidences of the truth of these words in Psalm lxxxii. "All the foundations of the earth are out of course," and he longs for the time when God will "gather together in one all things in Christ" (Eph. i. 10). But meanwhile he often travels in imagination beyond the present scene, and tries to picture to himself the glory and blessedness of that state which will then commence. But in doing this he must get his help from the Bible. . . .

'There are three things specially revealed for our comfort in reference to the world to come.

'1. It will be so glorious and beautiful that, in comparison, this world will be totally *forgotten* by us. Isa. lxv. 17.

'2. There will be *no sin* there. 2 Pet. iii. 13.

'3. There will be *no illness or infirmity* there. Isa. xxxiii. 24.

Now I can hardly express to you what glory and comfort I have seen in all these during the past year. . . .

'It is impossible in a small tract like this to touch on all the points which have struck me during the past year, but one more I must allude to. It is this. Our happiness does not depend on outward circumstances, but on the mercy of God. I have been in depths of outward distress, more than perhaps I ever was before in my life, but my most tried days have been my happiest. I do not need to go into particulars, suffice it to say that once during the year I was in deep trouble, and made to feel my weakness more than *ever I* did before, and had very important duties

dependent on me at the time, which I could not perform, and yet that was the very happiest day in the whole year to me. I record this to cheer my brethren in Christ, and encourage them to face trials with hope; and they will be all the more encouraged to do this when I tell them that my peace and childlike rest arose from a view I had of the meaning of those words, that Christ is "the brightness" of the Father's glory, that he upholds all things by "the word of his power." In fact, I felt that He upheld me, and I could afford to treat all difficulties with indifference, casting all my care upon Him, for I felt He cared for me. But I cannot always feel like that. Nevertheless it was a safe and happy refuge for my weary soul. . . .

'My time among you must be getting shorter, at any rate, and perhaps more so than some of us wish to think. But that we must leave. One thing I will say, the longer I minister to you the more I delight so to do, and the Lord gives me evidence that His word is not barren nor unfruitful among you. I cannot get about as I once could, and this sometimes pains me, but you must make the more of the Sunday services, as it is about the only time I have the opportunity of meeting you. We then meet together with Jesus in the midst, and if we make the best of these opportunities we shall not go "empty away." Only see to it that you come "hungry," for these are the only ones that are filled with good things. I do not forget that I prayed for more *inward* and spiritual light when we fitted up our gas apparatus last year; and I think I am

bound to say this prayer has been answered. We do not always like the way God takes to answer our prayers, but this must always be left to His unerring wisdom; so long as the answer is apparent to us, that should suffice. To His mercy and grace I commend you, and trust that in all our ways we may see His guiding hand, and be able to honour His holy Name, and bring forth fruit to His praise, and, as St. Paul says, that Christ may be magnified in our bodies, "whether it be by life or by death."

'I remain, your affectionate Pastor,

'ROBERT WALKER.

'*Wymeswold Vicarage.*'

The following affectionate and characteristic letters were his last:—

'*Vic., Wymeswold, Loughboro'.*

'*9th January*, 1883.

'MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am so sorry your letter has been unreplied to so long—it is really not because I did not feel interest in the subject it treated of, but because at this time of the year I am so very busy with "the stuff," as I call it.

'I am sorry to see you are a brother in affliction, and yet in another sense *glad*: for it creates that sympathy which is so seldom felt between two ministers—for, alas, the spirit "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos," etc., often divides most unworthily between the servants of God. I enter most fully into your remarks, and your letter was a great comfort to me; I wish mine might be the

same to you. As to your bodily weakness, I never could sympathise with anything of that sort till *last year*, when I fell so seriously ill in June. Ever since I have been a sort of hobble-de-gee, getting about a little, and preaching short sermons, and puffing and blowing. But my *weakness* has been a time for the display of God's *strength*, so I must not repine. As to the deadness of soul you speak of, I am sorry to say I suffer ten times more than you ever can—but I am just now favoured with a godly man as a helper, whose sermons are very profitable to me. . . . He is, however, leaving me, and I am full of sorrow on that account. But why should I be? The same LORD who sent him, can send another when He sees fit. All this is selfish. . . .

'I was very charmed with the account of Mary [Sukey Harley's daughter]. There is the true Sukey ring about her experience. How very gracious the Lord is! There is an old parishioner here, aged 78, the son of a godly woman who died at a great age, nearly 90, within this year, *during my incapacity*, brought to the feet of Jesus—a humble *tearful* follower of the Lamb! Wonder of wonders! If his poor mother could have seen the change, how delighted she would have been! But though she has not seen it, the Lord has graciously sent it. This gives me hope about my own children. Many have been the prayers offered for them, and in some of them I see plain marks of tenderness of conscience, "foolish timorousness," as Talkative calls it. Well, we can only sow the seed, and wait in faith and prayer. I have other cases here which interest me much,

but you would need to know them before you could take much interest in them. The parish seems to me quite *alive* with one here and one there in whom I take a paternal interest.

I can quite understand your love for dear old Mary. Such people seem to give us a sort of hold on the better world. We seem to know them still, though they have got above our cares and sorrows.

'The leanness you complain of I feel in a tenfold degree, but I like Hart's words:—

> "But I'm cold, I'm dark, I'm dead:
> Jesus will revive thee."

'In hope of this reviving, which I deeply and sadly need, and for which in His name I pray for us both,

'I remain, yours very affectionately,

'ROBERT WALKER.'

To one who traced his teaching under God to his ministry he wrote thus, on the last day he spent on earth:—

'*January* 11, 1883.

'I am very thankful to hear your account of the way you spent the coming in of the New Year. We may well praise and pray, when we think how God has provided in time past, and reflect how dependent we are upon him for the future.

'We are all pretty well: I am better than I was, though I am not very strong; still the Lord *has pro*vided for me thus far, and I must trust

Him for all that is yet to come. How long He will retain us in this world of sin and suffering is quite uncertain, but we are sure it will be well if only we can TRUST Him.

"We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come."

'I can quite understand how you labour with sin and temptation. You must expect it. Satan is busy, and will let no opportunity slip which he wickedly hopes will prove an occasion of falling to you. But if you are tripped up, may the Lord enable you to fall on your *knee*, as a good man expresses it. Satan will not gain any great advantage against you, if his attacks lead you to watch and pray. I want to trust Jesus more, and to view His suffering and victorious wrestling with the devil on my account, more and more. When I come to die I hope I shall be able to lean only on the work of Christ. The greatest mercy will be then to see that those sufferings and conflicts were FOR ME.

'May the Lord give us more faith and love, and fit us for His will—and at last take us *Home*.

'R. W.'

Thus we have given the fragments that have come to hand left by our dear brother—gathered them up, that they may not be lost. To the world they will have no interest, to the too confident professor they may seem but small things. But the chastened child of God will feel a sweet unity with the writer, and will admire the grace that shines throughout in the long-continued

exercise of life, humility, and love. A few hours after writing the foregoing letter he expired almost suddenly, though by no means unexpectedly, and very peacefully. He had desired, if it were the Lord's will, to be spared a lingering dismissal, and this was granted: so that those who most tenderly loved him, and most deeply mourned him, were enabled to give thanks.

After making some mention of his devotion to the Master's service, and desire for the salvation of souls, and the earnestness with which he warned and exhorted all with whom he came in contact, Mrs. Walker thus describes the gracious manner in which he was called to his eternal rest.

'My dear husband had been ill for the last three years off and on, but his nature was so lively that no one could believe it. So only the last twelve months did we know he had long been suffering from a fatal disease. He had not taken any preaching after God sent one of His own taught servants to help him. Up to that time he seemed inspired in the pulpit: and I deeply grieve his sermons were not taken down. His last text was very suggestive — "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." The last Sunday of his life, January 7, he took part in the sacrament, and looked fearfully ill. All the week he daily visited some of his sick parishioners, and they spoke of his conversation being in heaven. On Wednesday evening he went to an hour's service. *All the* week I noticed a particular lassitude

about him. He spoke only of Christ, and was bright and cheerful as ever. On Thursday all the children were away, and we spent the day alone. After five o'clock tea he sat by my side, reading dear Mr. Gilpin's letters, and making his remarks on the comfort they had been to his soul. At six he complained of fulness and uneasy breathing. At eight he called in the servants to prayer, and read Matthew xi. He stopped at the last verse but one, and said, "This is for you and me to-night, my dear,"—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He knelt on one knee, and committed his soul and ours to the keeper of Israel, and the moment he rose he was struck with paralysis of the entire left side. I have never known how I encouraged him to get upstairs, but it was managed, and I helped him undress and got him into bed. He looked so earnestly, and said, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, and He shall exalt you in due season." Yes, I saw it all: the precious spirit entered into eternal rest at half-past one in the morning, leaving me his sorrowing mourner for life. I, all alone; but "underneath were the everlasting arms."

'I find marked in his Prayer-book, Psalm xxxviii. 15, and lxxi. 4, "For in thee, O Lord, have I put my trust: thou shalt answer for me, O Lord my God." "For thou, O Lord my God, art the thing that I long for: thou art my hope even from my youth." And latterly that beautiful hymn, "Weary of earth, and laden with my sin," [1]

[1] Bickersteth's Hymnal, revised and enlarged edition. Hymn 149.

was a great comfort to him and always on his lips, especially the lines:

> "Yea thou wilt answer for me, righteous Lord,
> Thine all the merits, mine the great reward;
> Thine the sharp thorns, mine the golden crown;
> Mine the life won, and thine the life laid down."

'I saw the deep humility of soul, and nothingness at the feet of Jesus. He had such an opening of the word on Stephen's death, and on the crucifixion. Some days he lived in heaven, and Christ was his theme always. He walked and talked with Christ. . . . None but those who knew his brightness and natural joyousness and his humility could form any idea of the bitterness of his loss. It is only for a little time I know, and I can praise the Lord for the shortness of his transit, only three and a half hours.'

The clerical friend who ministered for Mr. Walker during the last weeks of his life bears the following testimony:—

'*February* 26, 1883.

'My dear Friend,—You have asked me to give you some account of the last days of our lamented brother, Mr. Walker. I was only with him for one month, but during that short time, from the warmth of his heart and the tenderness of his disposition, I seemed to have had a much longer acquaintance with the innermost thoughts of his heart. I went to Wymeswold in the early part of December, and remained there till the *time of* his death. And I feel that I ought to

esteem it a high privilege to have had intercourse with one whose character was in all respects so beautiful.

I regret that I cannot recall many of his utterances, they have escaped from my recollection. But one striking remark that he made to me the very day before his death lives in my memory. We were speaking of the beautiful grace of humility, and he said, "We must be humbled before we are humble." What a suggestive thought is this! I also remember that when I was speaking to him on the subject of prayer, and on answers to prayer, he told me he had been lying awake one night, dwelling on something that had been very trying to him, when he seemed to hear those words spoken to him, "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee."

'I must make one more remark concerning our departed brother, and then I must leave you to make what use you think fit of the brief allusion that I have made to him. It was very interesting in my intercourse with him to observe how earnest was his desire to dedicate his gifts and learning to God. You are aware that he had taken a very high degree at Cambridge, was a Fellow of his College, and intimate with some of the most distinguished men of his University, yet he was as humble as a child; and was not his case a beautiful confirmation of what he had himself remarked, that "we must be humbled before we are humble"?

I will merely add that I think his loss is irreparable. In the village where he preached the

Gospel so simply and faithfully he will long be remembered with affectionate regret.

'Believe me, yours most truly,

'F. A. BAINES.'

We must now close this short memorial of our late dear friend and brother, leaving his testimony to witness, as in the hearts of the Lord's people it assuredly will, to the grace manifested in him.

His 'witness is in heaven,' and his 'record is on high.'

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